

Prairie Solar Farm

Planning Application

Appendix 13 – Self-
assessment under the
Environment Effects Act 1978

June 2018

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Item	Referral criteria	Criteria triggered (Y/N)?	Project response
Individual potential environmental effects			
Individual types of potential effects on the environment that might be of regional or State significance, and therefore warrant referral of a project, are:			
1	<p>potential clearing of 10 ha or more of native vegetation from an area that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – is of an Ecological Vegetation Class identified as endangered by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (in accordance with Appendix 2 of Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework); or – is, or is likely to be, of very high conservation significance (as defined in accordance with Appendix 3 of Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework); and – is not authorised under an approved Forest Management Plan or Fire Protection Plan 	No	<p>The project proposes to remove less than 10 hectares (ha) of native vegetation. The project proposes to remove 2.089 ha of native vegetation, which is comprised of 1.808 ha of patches of native vegetation, and 13 trees (including 11 Large trees). This total considers direct and indirect losses associated with the project.</p>
2	<p>potential long-term loss of a significant proportion (e.g. 1 to 5 percent depending on the conservation status of the species) of known remaining habitat or population of a threatened species within Victoria.</p>	No	<p>The project does not propose to remove 1 to 5 percent of remaining habitat or population of a threatened species within Victoria.</p>
3	<p>potential long-term change to the ecological character of a wetland listed under the Ramsar Convention or in 'A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia'.</p>	No	<p>The project does not propose impacts to a RAMSAR wetland or wetland in 'A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia'.</p>
4	<p>potential extensive or major effects on the health or biodiversity of aquatic, estuarine or marine ecosystems, over the long term.</p>	No	<p>The project is unlikely to result in extensive or major effects on the health or biodiversity of aquatic, estuarine or marine ecosystems, over the long term.</p>

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			While it is proposed to undertake works within the Bullock Creek waterway to construct approximately five (5) vehicular creek crossings, appropriate sediment and erosion control measures will be implemented to mitigate risk of adverse effect to the aquatic ecosystem associated with the creek. The mitigation measures will be developed as part of the construction and operational environmental management plans that will be prepared and implemented for the project (see Appendix 5 - Project Environmental Management Framework).
5	potential extensive or major effects on the health, safety or well-being of a human community, due to emissions to air or water or chemical hazards or displacement of residences.	No	The project is unlikely to results in extensive or major effects on the health, safety or well-being of a human community. The project will not involve emissions to air or water or chemical hazards or displacement of residences.
6	potential greenhouse gas emissions exceeding 200,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per annum, directly attributable to the operation of the facility.	No	The project is a renewable energy facility and does not involve greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed, the project will result in savings of approximately 426,880 tons of carbon dioxide.
A combination of environmental effects			
A combination of <i>two or more</i> of the following types of potential effects on the environment that might be of regional or State significance, and therefore warrant referral of a project, are:			
1	potential clearing of 10 ha or more of native vegetation, unless authorised under an approved Forest Management Plan or Fire Protection Plan.	No	The project proposes to remove less than 10 ha of native vegetation. The project proposes to remove 2.089 ha of native vegetation, which is comprised of 1.808 ha of patches of native vegetation, and 13 trees (including 11 Large trees). This total considers direct and indirect losses associated with the project.
2	matters listed under the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i> : – potential loss of a significant area of a listed	No	The project proposes to remove a relatively small quantity of native vegetation. The GHD report <i>Flora and Fauna Assessment: Prairie Solar Farm</i>

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	ecological community; or – potential loss of a genetically important population of an endangered or threatened species (listed or nominated for listing), including as a result of loss or fragmentation of habitats; or – potential loss of critical habitat; or – potential significant effects on habitat values of a wetland supporting migratory bird species		recorded Plains Grassland (EVC 132) within the project site that meets the criteria for the associated Northern Plains Grassland Community (see Appendix 6). The GHD report concludes that, due to a history disturbance at the site, the vegetation present does not represent a high quality example of the Northern Plains Grassland Community. Some impact to this community will occur as a result of the project.
3	potential extensive or major effects on landscape values of regional importance, especially where recognised by a planning scheme overlay or within or adjoining land reserved under the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i> .	No	The project is unlikely to result in extensive or major effects on landscape values of regional importance. The site and the nearby area are not affected by a planning scheme overlay that recognises any particular landscape values of the area.
4	potential extensive or major effects on land stability, acid sulphate soils or highly erodible soils over the short or long term.	No	The project is unlikely to result in extensive or major effects on land stability, acid sulphate soils or highly erodible soils over the short or long term. The site is generally flat and is not located in an area at risk of Potential Acid Sulphate Soils. Notwithstanding this, appropriate sediment and erosion control measures will be implemented through the construction and operational environmental management plans to be prepared for the project (see Appendix 5 - Project Environmental Management Framework).
5	potential extensive or major effects on beneficial uses of waterbodies over the long term due to changes in water	No	The project is unlikely to result in extensive or major effects on beneficial uses of waterbodies over the long term.

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	quality, streamflows or regional groundwater levels.		<p>The project does not propose significant ground works that would result in long-term, changes to water quality, streamflows or regional groundwater levels.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, appropriate sediment and erosion control measures will be implemented through the construction and operational environmental management plans to be prepared for the project to mitigate risk of adverse effects to water quality within Bullock Creek and nearby waterways (see Appendix 5 - Project Environmental Management Framework).</p>
6	potential extensive or major effects on social or economic well-being due to direct or indirect displacement of non-residential land use activities.	No	<p>The project is unlikely to result in extensive or major effects on social or economic well-being in the area.</p> <p>The project does not propose to undertake land use or development that would result in the direct or indirect displacement of non-residential land use activities. The project will not adversely affect the ability of nearby land owners to continue agricultural land uses or access to irrigation infrastructure.</p>
7	potential for extensive displacement of residences or severance of residential access to community resources due to infrastructure development.	No	<p>The project is unlikely to result in the displacement of any residences or severance of residential access to community resources.</p> <p>The project is considered to be a low-impact development from an amenity perspective (including noise, landscape and visual impact, and pollution/emissions) and is unlikely to result in a displacement of residences.</p> <p>The project is wholly contained within the site boundaries and will not result in the severance of residential access to community resources.</p>

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8	potential significant effects on the amenity of a substantial number of residents, due to extensive or major, long-term changes in visual, noise and traffic conditions.	No	<p>The project is unlikely to result in significant effects on the amenity of a substantial number of residents.</p> <p>The project is considered to be a low-impact development from an amenity perspective (including noise, landscape and visual impact, and pollution/emissions) and is unlikely to result in direct or indirect displacement of non-residential land use activities.</p>
9	potential exposure of a human community to severe or chronic health or safety hazards over the short or long term, due to emissions to air or water or noise or chemical hazards or associated transport.	No	<p>The project is unlikely to result in the exposure of a human community to severe or chronic health or safety hazards over the short or long term.</p> <p>The project does not propose to use hazardous chemicals, discharge hazardous waste or gases on a large scale.</p> <p>The project proposes substantial electrical infrastructure, including large-scale battery storage. The proposed substation, terminal station, Power Conditioning Units, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, and battery storage systems will be built in accordance with all specifications and standards required in the Australian electricity generation industry. Similarly, noise emissions are expected to be low and in accordance with the relevant standards and guidelines, including the <i>Noise from Industry in Regional Victoria</i> (NIRV) guideline (EPA Publication 1411).</p> <p>In addition, a secure perimeter fence of approximately 2.1 metres (m) in height and associated surveillance cameras will be installed around the proposed solar farm and the terminal station, to provide for public safety.</p>
10	potential extensive or major effects on Aboriginal cultural heritage.	No	<p>The project is unlikely to result in extensive or major effects on Aboriginal cultural heritage.</p> <p>A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is currently being</p>

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			<p>prepared for the project. Once approved, the CHMP will ensure known cultural heritage is protected or that impacts and managed in accordance with the CHMP. The CHMP will include appropriate controls are in place to minimise the risk of harm to unknown cultural heritage that may be uncovered during construction.</p>
11	<p>potential extensive or major effects on cultural heritage places listed on the Heritage Register or the Archaeological Inventory under the <i>Heritage Act 1995</i>.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The project is unlikely to result in potential extensive or major effects on cultural heritage places listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) or Inventory (VHI) under the <i>Heritage Act 1995</i>.</p> <p>There are no places registered on the VHR or VHI that apply to the project site or on adjacent land.</p> <p>On 22 May 2018 EHP consultants observed a potential post-contact archaeological site in the south-eastern portion of the core development area adjacent to Bucklands Road, whilst surveying the project site as part of the CHMP.</p> <p>Heritage Victoria has been notified of the potential archaeological site, and a brief report is being prepared to submit to Heritage Victoria for advice on whether further assessment of the potential site is required and protection under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> is warranted.</p> <p>In the event that the potential archaeological site warrants protection under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> Pacific Hydro will either ensure that it is excluded from impact from the proposed development and an appropriate buffer established around the site, or may apply for a permit under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> to disturb the site.</p> <p>The Project EMF developed for the project includes a requirement to avoid impact to any post-contact heritage sites protected under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> unless the necessary approvals have been granted (see Appendix 5 - Project Environmental Management</p>

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			Framework).